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in the mounds. The main argument that had been advanced against the great antiquity of the skulls was the mode of interment. It was quite true, that when the Pagan method of disposing of the dead by cremation went out, burial in a crouched position was introduced, and though extended burial might perhaps in many places belong to a comparatively modern period, the notion that it did so generally was refuted by the practice in the north of Scotland, at least. There it is certain that the rudest implements were found in the extended kists. That was a known fact, and it might have been assumed that such would be the case, for extended burial was the simplest and easiest mode of disposing of the dead. The irregular directions in which the bodies had been laid on the ground also afforded evidence that they had not been interred by men professing Christianity. In Christian interments the head was always laid towards the west; but in the kists of Caithness the head was laid in no particular position: the bodies being sometimes extended towards the north and south. In his opinion, no objection to the great antiquity of the remains could stand against the distinct evidence of the very rude construction of the implements found in the kist. If they departed from the self-evident rule of classification adopted in the Copenhagen Museum, they would be led into inextricable confusion. He did not mean to assert that these remains went back to a period of ten thousand years; probably they did not go back more than a few hundred years before the Christian era. He thought, however, that they had in those remains relics of the original population of Britain, and that some portions of them lingered on in the north of Scotland, until overtaken and extirpated by a people more advanced in civilisation.

Some further Notes upon Pre-historic Hut-circles. By GEORGE E. ROBERTS, F.G.S., Hon. Sec. A.S.L.

IN continuation of this subject, illustrated by myself in a paper read before the Anthropological Society last session, and by an article published in the *Popular Science Review* for May, I propose to notice, briefly, some newly-discovered sites of these ancient dwelling-spots; and others, which although previously known, have been wrongly interpreted. My friend, the Rev. Mr. Joass of Eddertoun (Ross-shire), has been prosecuting similar researches to my own with great vigour, and he has kindly placed at my disposal the material he has obtained. His notes of exploration are so exceedingly interesting that I prefer incorporating them in their entirety, rather than making extracts.

"During a recent visit to Strathnaner, in the north of Sutherland, I discovered a great many hut circles, almost invariably in pairs, and surrounded by groups of tumuli of sepulchral origin. These circles are about forty feet in diameter, and twenty or thirty yards apart. In Rogart, also, I found similar pairs of circles associated with tumuli, which latter are connected, in the traditions of the district, with battles fought between the McKays and Sutherlands within the historic period. Such stories frequently spring up to suit the circumstances of particular localities. The kists of these tumuli indicate that they were not the hurriedly got-up graves of those who fell in battle, but the burial-places of detached settlements scattered over

every important river terrace, or bordering the sheltered bays along the coast; and point to a period long prior to the time when men fought as McKays or as members of any existing Celtic clan whatsoever. Do the *pairs* of circles seem to you to have any connexion with the fact recorded by Dion Cassius that the early Britons used wives in common (l. 76, 12). A custom again referred to by him in the story of the Empress Julia and the wife of Argentocoxus:—

... “Ex quo urbanè in primis, Argentocoxi, cujusdam Caledonii uxor, Juliæ Augustæ, quæ ipsam mordebat, post initum fœdus, quod mixtim cum maribus coirent, dixisse fertur.

“Nos multo melius explemus ea, quæ natura postulat necessitas, quam vos Romanæ; nam aperte cum optimiis viris habemus consuetudinem vos autem occulte pessimi homines adulteriis polluunt. Sic illa Britannia.” (Dio. l. 76, 16.)

“This interview occurred early in the third century. Was the custom referred to a remnant of an earlier time, dating from the period of occupancy of the hut circles? Would not this custom make it likely that in the earliest times, at least, the males and females should occupy separate neighbouring circles? The cairn at Skibo which we were to examine was found to contain a large *triangular* and rude kist, but no remains.”

A large number of circular “barrows,” as they have been wrongly called, have been known for some years to exist on the Moor of Dinnat, near Aboyne. My intention was to have visited these in the month of July, but illness prevented the journey. I am indebted to the Marchioness of Huntly for some suggestive notes upon them, obtained by a Mr. Christie, a schoolmaster upon the Aboyne estate. He describes them as being situate on the north side of the Dee, south of the northern highway, east and west from the new bridge at Dinnat, for about half a mile in each direction. They amount in number to nearly two hundred, so that the moor of Dinnat was a not unimportant dwelling-spot in pre-historic times. Mr. Christie’s description of them entirely precludes the possibility of their being “barrows” or kists, as they are circular or oval hollows in the ground, in which charred oak has been found; but no regular or careful investigation of them or their contents has yet been made.

In a letter to myself, Lady Huntly remarks that she has long regarded it as an extensive and promising field for investigation, and would be happy to give orders to a labourer to explore the site under proper superintendence.

I am convinced that a very large addition to the data we already possess as to the domestic and social lives of these ancient hunters and fishers of the Highlands, would result from a careful and continued examination of the sea-board north of Tain. Numerous *kjökken-möddings* exist along the shores of the Dornoch Frith; in one of which, at a spot opposite to the Meikle-ferry, an enormous quantity of small flint-flakes, both of the knife and arrow-head form, are to be seen, commingled with limpet and mussel shells, and split bones of deer and other animals. Specimens of these I exhibit. Such *kjökken-möddings* generally occur in the vicinity of hut-circles.

It is, perhaps, somewhat premature to attempt any connection in

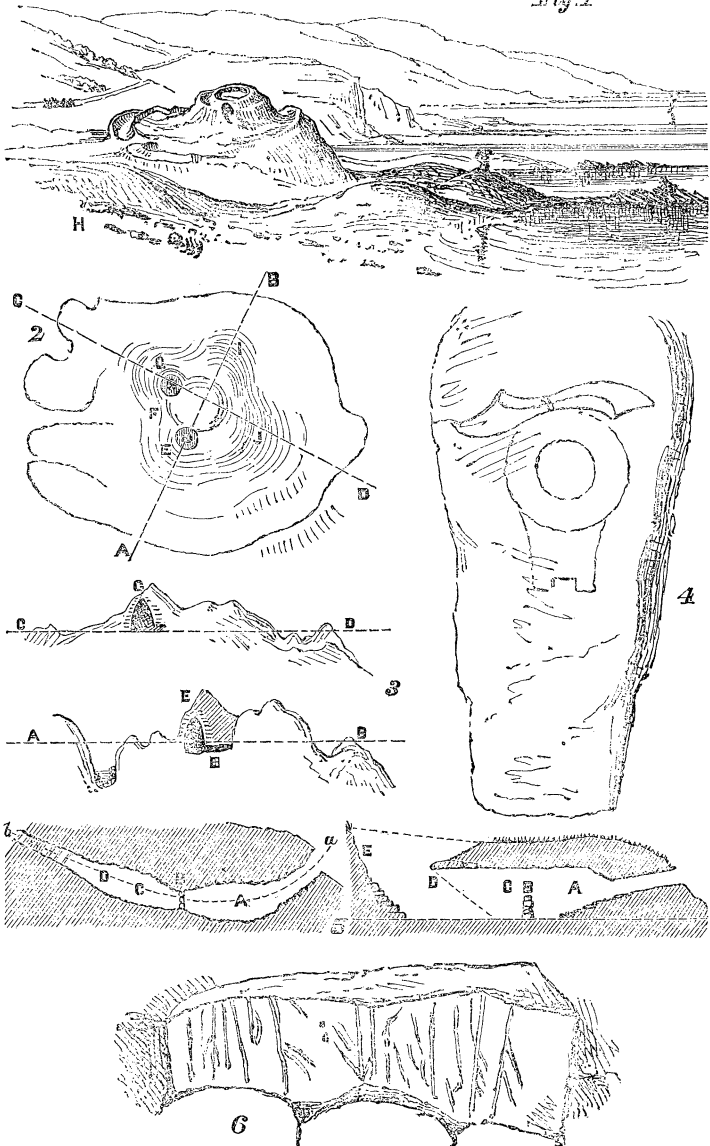
time between the hut-circle dwellings of Northern Scotland, and the beehive-shaped huts of Cornwall, Devon, and South Wales. But we may reasonably assume that the Highland dwellings were covered in from the inclemency of the weather by some rude roof of wattle, or heather supported upon poles; and the discovery of low narrow galleries, or rather roofed spaces *beneath* the central hearth-stone in the Sutherlandshire hut-circles, as described by Mr. Joass and myself in the articles before referred to, connect these dwellings in design with those in which similar apartments—probably in each case the sleeping chambers during the winter months—have been found in S.W. England, as at Carn Goch in Carmarthenshire, and those described by Borlase (*Antiquities*, p. 273) as then existing near Penzance.

Mr. S. R. Pattison, F.G.S., has been good enough to direct my attention to some notices of circles, indicating dwelling-spots, existing within the limits of camps at Carn Englee, near Newport, Pembrokeshire; within Ingleborough camp, near Clapham, Yorkshire; on the side of the Watling Street in Northumberland, and on the north-east side of the Cheviot Hills. These have all been briefly noticed by Mr. H. M'Lauchlan in the Report of the Royal Institution of Cornwall for 1857. The circles in the Cheviot camp are described as being of various diameters, seldom, however, more than thirty feet; the mean diameter is placed at twenty-five feet. The openings are generally on the south side.

Numerous hut-circles also occur near Clûn Castle, Cornwall, of a rude circular form, varying from eight to forty feet in diameter; the "walls" or hedges composed of unhewn stones placed without cement. The hearth-stone was met with beneath the centre of one circle covered up with about twelve inches of mould. These are locally known as the "huts of the old people." They have been briefly described by Miss Millett in the Report of the Penzance Nat. Hist. and Antiquarian Society for 1849; and previously by the Rev. Mr. Buller, Mr. Saull, Dr. Young. (See *Trans. Brit. Arch. Assoc.*, 1846; and "Notitia Britanniae," by W. D. Saull, F.S.A.) Similar circles have been noted by Mr. R. Edmonds, jun., in the Isle of Bryher, off the Penzance coast. (Rep. Penzance Nat. Hist. Soc., 1849, p. 312.)

The Forty-fifth Annual Report of the Royal Institution of Cornwall (1863) contains an interesting paper by Mr. Edmonds on the "Bee-hive British dwellings at Bosphrennis and Chapel Enny near Penzance." As Mr. Edmonds considers them the most perfect examples of the hut remaining, I propose to compare his detailed description of their characteristics with the more fragmentary remains of our Highland huts. Both Cornish examples may more properly be termed, (as the author remarks) "Bee-hive *caves*, as they were originally, with the exception of the entrance, buried beneath thick turf; with their entrances probably also concealed by furze or other evergreens, like the well-known longitudinal cave at Boleit in S. Buryan. The little which remains of the roof at Bosphrennis is still covered with turf." A longitudinal chamber occupies eighteen feet of the hut-space at Chapel Enny, and nine feet at Bosphrennis, in each case leading, as a vestibule would, to the circular bee-hive chamber, which is about twelve feet in diameter.

Fig. 1



PREHISTORIC HUT CIRCLES.

Many other hut-circle dwelling-spots of like character have been discovered in various parts of the kingdom; and I am convinced that much valuable light may be thrown upon a period which cannot at present be termed other than pre-historic, by a careful investigation of them.*

The following Notes, received lately from my indefatigable friend Mr. Joass, may with propriety be added to my paper.

Notes on the Antiquities of Sutherland.

Hearing from my friend Sheriff Mackenzie, of Dornoch, of the existence of an ancient fort, with dome-roofed chamber attached, and surrounded by earth-works and a ditch, on the farm of Kintradwell, near Brora, I resolved to take an early opportunity of inspecting it, and arrangements for that purpose having kindly been made by my informant and Mr. Houstoun, of Kintradwell, who placed a party of six good men at my disposal, excavations were commenced.

The building occupies a commanding position close to the edge of a sandy terrace, once an old coast line, and the stone work is now covered to a considerable depth with earth and turf.

Work was begun at E, which had previously been opened by accident. When the rubbish had been cleared out, an elliptical dome-roofed chamber was exposed of Cyclopean structure, each tier of stone overlapping the lower, till the walls approached sufficiently to be capped by one large flag which had been previously removed.

At the bottom of this chamber, a passage two feet wide by twelve inches high led towards the interior, as at E (3). Buried in black mould at F (2), and about a foot below the surface, were found jaws of swine and deer, with part of the frontal bone and horn-core of a large animal of the ox tribe, besides shells of the limpet and periwinkle. On discovering that one of our diggers had assisted at the excavation of Maes Howe, Orkney, and knew what he was about, I left him with instructions to dig at G (2), while I accompanied Mr. Houstoun to H (1), a point in the slope of the same sandy terrace, and about one hundred yards distant, where a kist and human remains had been discovered a short time previously, by the blowing away of the sand. Near this I found a number of human bones, including portions of the skull, part of the upper jaw detached and without teeth, a few vertebræ, the os coccygis, part of the pelvis, an ulna and radius, &c.

In the kist, on its first exposure, was found a piece of deer's horn perforated in its long axis, as if to be used as a knife-handle. Also the brow antler of a stag of very large size. This seems to have been separated from the main horn by successive blows of a blunt instrument (a stone celt?) and by breaking. It is very old, and almost crumbles to the touch. It adheres strongly to the tongue, and now probably consists of but phosphate of lime. Near the kist an irregularly

* Dr. Aitken, F.A.S.L., of the District Lunatic Asylum, at Inverness, has been good enough to place in my hand some portions of a calvarium, with fragments of lower jaw, found in a kist while excavating in the grounds of the asylum. The kist was of the usual character, composed of four stones placed upright, so as to enclose a space about three feet long and two wide. No other portions of the skeleton were found.

shaped flint flake was found. There are no native flints. Close to the kist stood a rough sandstone slab, bearing incised ornamental markings as shown (4).

This stone, I am informed by the Secretary to the Society of Scottish Antiquaries, has not been figured before. It is, moreover, different from any given in his very valuable Monograph on the "Sculpture-stones of Scotland."

Returning to the Fort, we found that the digging at α (2) had resulted in the discovery of a chamber α (3), corresponding in all respects to that at ϵ . The buttress-like prominence at 1 and 2 (3) probably indicate similar cells. No time to work this out, darkness coming on before we had done more than dig down from the interior circle upon the passage (3).

Leaving further excavations at this locality to a more favourable opportunity, when longer days bring better weather, we next morning held council over the mouth of an underground passage opening in the hill side, about a mile off, and averred by the majority of our men to have been traced to Dunrobin Castle, seven miles away, whilst the utmost concession to our most delicately expressed doubts on the subject, could go no further than to reduce its length to four hundred yards, throughout every inch of which it had positively been followed by the uncle's wife's father of one of our party, accompanied by his collie and carrying a candle.

The opening in question occurs about four feet from the top of a high and steep slope, forming the western side of the ravine in which runs the river of Kintradwell. The passage, built with undressed and uncemented stones, and roofed by rude slabs of granite, is at first about two feet square, but at the distance of seven feet the height diminishes to eighteen inches. This much we could ascertain from the outside. Sending in a trusty Clumber-spaniel and a keen little terrier to serve "notice to quit" upon all wild cats and other possible vermin not pleasant to encounter at a disadvantage, and being assured by their return that the premises were unoccupied, I clothed for the occasion, and, pushing a lighted lamp before me, crawled and finally dragged myself, into a chamber, Λ (5), five feet high by four broad at the widest part, and ten feet long.

After a careful examination of the walls, I could find no opening suggestive of a passage to Dunrobin or elsewhere. I discovered at β (5) a wall two feet high, separating the chamber Λ from γ ; another which proved to be of the same dimensions. Being now joined by Mr. Houston and a friend with another lamp, we discovered on the perpendicular face of a stone on the top of the wall, β , certain markings which were unquestionably artificial, and which were at first thought to have been made by the sharpening of weapons. On more careful examination by daylight, their resemblance to early Scandinavian letters was striking, although I have failed to identify more than two or three of the characters, some of which seem to be inverted.

At δ the chamber γ was found filled up to the roof with loose black earth, in which occurred numerous shells of the periwinkle and limpet, with several bones of oxen and small portions of very hard peat. By careful digging the side walls were exposed to ϵ , but could be

traced no farther, even after the removal of seven stones arranged like steps, of which the ends were built into the walls, and which terminated the building.

This subterranean retreat resembles, in several respects, that previously described to you as occurring in the strath of Helmsdale* (the length of which was thirty-three feet; that of this, from A to B, is thirty-four).

[The above notes have been communicated to "the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland."]

An Account of the Human Bones found in the Round and Long Tumuli, situated on the Cotswold Hills, near Cheltenham. By Dr. H. BIRD.

The barrows and tumuli on the Cotswold Hills vary in their size, structure, and contents: they are of two kinds—round tumuli, and long barrows.

First; as to the round tumuli. The round tumuli are roughly constructed of loose surface or quarried stones; a kist is generally placed near the centre; its sides and ends are formed of dry walling of small flat stones, and covered with rough unhewn stones, sloping each way like the roof of a house, or placed flat across the walls. And the tumulus is raised up, and forced into shape, with small surface stones; sometimes they are covered with a layer of earth a few inches in thickness. The circle may be raised four or five feet in its highest part, and may be from twelve to twenty yards across.

The kist may contain the bones of one, or many, human bodies of different ages, and both sexes, and flint flakes, and black rude pottery. Among the stones of the tumulus, some distance from the kist, human bones, flint flakes, pottery, lumps of flint, round pieces of Bredon gravel, horses' cattle and pigs' bones and teeth, shank bones of horses and cattle divided vertically, calcined human bones, stones and charcoal, may be found.

There are several round tumuli near Cheltenham, but most of them have been frequently disturbed. Some of the bones found in the tumuli had been fractured and again united, a humerus in Dry Heath field, and a parietal bone from the Waste tumulus. Many of the thigh bones were peculiar in having a wide, flat, oblong space below the trochanter major. The persons to whom these thigh bones belonged differed in height from five feet five inches to six feet and upwards.

Secondly. The long tumuli, or barrows, are constructed in a superior manner as compared with the round tumuli. They are formed of loose surface or quarried stones, having dried walling running through or across them in different directions, to support and maintain their form; in the large end a heart-shaped curve is formed, which contracts into a form something like a portion of the human heart.

They gradually rise from the surface of the ground at their smallest end to several feet above it at their larger and wider end, where there are dry walling entrances, or large stones placed in the form of platforms, or altars.

* See *Journal of the Anthropological Society*, vol. ii, p. cccxxxv.